



SOUTH CAMBRIDGE SHIRE  
RURAL DISTRICT

in the  
Administrative County of Cambridge.

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for

1945

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To the Chairman and Members  
of the  
South Cambridgeshire Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present for your consideration my  
Annual Report for the year 1945 on the Health, Sanitary  
Conditions, and Vital Statistics, of the South Cambridgeshire  
Rural District.

The Report is prepared in accordance  
with the instructions contained in Circular 28/46 issued by  
the Ministry of Health in February 1946.

The general health of the population has,  
so far, continued to be good.

Arthur Morgan,  
Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area of District	-	112,315 acres.
Estimated resident population	-	21,900
Number of inhabited houses	-	7,279
Number of parishes	-	52
Ratable Value	-	£80. 19. 0.
Sum represented by a penny rate	-	£328. 5. 10.

Apart from the parish of Sawston where there are paper mills and leather works giving employment to a considerable number of people the district is essentially rural in character most of the inhabitants being employed in agricultural pursuits and occupations subsidiary thereto.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

## Live Births:-

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Legitimate	356	186	170
Illegitimate	58	25	33
Totals	<u>414</u>	<u>211</u>	<u>203</u>

Birth Rate per 1000 estimated resident population - 18.8  
Birth Rate per 1000 population (England & Wales) - 16.1

## Still Births:-

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Legitimate	8	3	5
Illegitimate	3	1	2
Totals	<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>

Rate per 1000 total (live and still births) - 25.8

## Deaths:-

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
	<u>302</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>131</u>

Death Rate per 1000 estimated resident population - 13.7  
Death Rate per 1000 population (England and Wales) - 11.4

## Death from puerperal causes:-

(a) Puerperal sepsis - Nil.  
(b) Other puerperal causes - Nil.

## Number of deaths of infants under one year of age:-

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Legitimate	10	7	3
Illegitimate	2	1	1
Totals	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>

## Death Rate of infants under one year of age:-

(a) All infants per 1000 live births - 24.1  
(b) Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births - 28.0  
(c) Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live

	<u>1945.</u>	<u>1944.</u>	<u>1943.</u>	<u>1942.</u>
Deaths from measles (all ages)	-	-	-	-
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages)	1	-	-	-
Deaths from diarrhoea (under 2 years)	3	-	1	-
Deaths from pneumonia (all ages)	7	11	8	11
Deaths from cancer (all ages)	51	46	47	54
Deaths from influenza (all ages)	1	4	8	4

## Birth and Death Rates years 1942 - 1945:-

	1945.	1944.	1943.	1942.
Birth Rate	18.8	18.9	16.9	12.0
Death Rate	13.7	15.5	12.5	15.8

Table Classifying Deaths under Age Groups.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Under 1 year	10	7	3
1 and under 2	-	-	-
2 and under 5	1	-	1
5 and under 15	3	1	2
15 and under 25	2	1	1
25 and under 35	6	2	4
35 and under 45	15	9	6
45 and under 55	13	6	7
55 and under 65	30	19	11
65 and under 75	75	46	29
75 and over	147	80	67
Totals	<u>302</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>131</u>

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

There are no alterations to record in the general arrangement of these services.

## Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

(a) A whole time Medical Officer of Health who also acts for other districts.

(b) Since the resignation of the Assistant Sanitary Inspector in October 1943 Mr. A. C. Dyson, the Senior Inspector, has carried on without assistance. At the time of writing, however, an additional Sanitary Inspector has been appointed.

## Laboratory Facilities:-

Chemical and bacteriological examinations of water are made by the Public Analyst at Cambridge. The Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, make all the necessary bacteriological examinations in cases of infectious diseases etc.

Samples of milk are dealt with by the Agricultural Department, University of Cambridge, or by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory.

Hospitals:-

There are no General Hospitals situated in the Area.

## Isolation Hospitals:-

None within the area. Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are generally sent to the Cambridge Borough Isolation Hospital. Some, however, have gone to the Newmarket Rural District Council's (Cambs) Isolation Hospital near Newmarket. In each case the charges are £2. 12s. 6d. weekly plus the cost of removal by ambulance. This charge, however, has now been raised to £5. 5s. Od. weekly.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

## Water Supplies:-

Thirty three of the 52 parishes in the area have piped supplies from the three waterworks referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) below. The other villages are dealt with separately:-

(a) The Croydon Pumping Station:- This waterworks supplies the parishes of Abington Pigotts, Bassingbourn, Kneeworth, Litlington, Melbourn, Meldreth, Guilden Morden, Steeple Morden, Shingay, Wendy, Whaddon, Arrington, Croydon, Gamlingay, Little Gransden, East Hatley, Hatley St. George, Orwell & Wimpole, (part.) (Estimated Population: 6,692.) The water is obtained from a bore sunk into the greensand. The total depth of the bore is 150 feet and the thickness of the overlying gault 91 feet.

(b) The Linton Pumping Station is situated in the valley of the River Granta about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile S.E. of Hildersham Church. The water is obtained from a boring into the chalk 250 feet in depth. The parishes supplied are Great Abington, Little Abington, Balsham, Bartlow, Carlton, Castle Camps, Hildersham, Horseheath, Linton, Shudy Camps, West Wickham, Weston Colville, and West Wratting. (Estimated Population: 5,214.)

(c) Sawston, the largest parish in the Area (Population: 1,804) has a piped supply from the Sawston Waterworks which commenced to function in 1938. The water comes from a borehole sunk approximately 150 feet into the chalk. This waterworks was designed for the supply of Sawston with a possible extension to the adjacent village of Pampisford which has not been completed.

The villages of Heydon, Great Chishill and Little Chishill (combined population: 650) have a piped supply adequate for their needs, from the Saffron Walden Waterworks.

The parish of Longstowe (Population: 278) has a partial supply provided by the Chesterton and St. Ives Joint Water Board. The water is distributed at a low pressure and the supply is completely inadequate.

The remaining 15 parishes without piped supplies can be divided into three groups:-

(1) Those in the valley of the river Cam (Babraham, Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton and Whittlesford. Total Population: 2,714.)

These parishes are, for the most part, dependent upon shallow wells in the chalk which produce water in varying quantities and of doubtful quality. At the time of the inception of the Linton Area Scheme in 1933 it was intended that these parishes together with Sawston and Pampisford should be supplied from Linton. This suggestion, however, was not implemented.

(2) Those that could have been supplied by the Croydon Pumping Station, Viz: Barrington, Fowlmere, Foxton, Shepreth, Thriplow and Tadlow. (Total Population: 1,864.)

(3) Parishes that could be more conveniently supplied by the Chesterton and St. Ives Joint Water Board: Viz: Kingston, (Population: 146), Great Eversden, (Population: 225), Little Eversden, (Population: 178.) The Chesterton and St. Ives Water Board have a pumping station in the village of Kingston and here a partial supply by means of standpipes is available. The neighbouring villages of Great and Little Eversden are very badly off for water which is, at the present moment, carted to Great Eversden from the Kingston source.

The general question of water supplies throughout the area is under revision and the whole problem is being dealt with by the District Council's Consulting Engineer. The proposals include the provision of a filtration plant at the Croydon Pumping Station.

Analyses:-

Full chemical and bacteriological analyses are made monthly of the water supplied from the Croydon, Linton, and Sawston waterworks. In the case of Longstowe, Great and Little Chishill, and Heydon, they are made three monthly but are supplemented by monthly bacteriological examination. All supplies are chlorinated. In the case of the Croydon supply, however, the Public Health Committee, contrary to advice, decided to cease chlorination in January 1945, the general idea, I think, being that chlorination accentuated the unpleasant characteristics of the water which was already being treated by sodium hexa meta phosphate or calgon in an attempt to prevent the precipitation of oxycarbonate of iron and thus render the water more palatable. On September 19th, the Public Analyst reported in the following words regarding a sample taken from a tap off the rising main at the Croydon Pumping Station:-

"The results obtained on the analysis of this sample indicate a water of moderate hardness containing little organic matter though contaminated rather heavily with micro-organisms of sewage type. It is to be recommended that this water supply be chlorinated immediately and that the source of contamination be investigated."

On receipt of this report chlorination was at once recommenced, treatment with calgon stopped, and investigations instituted in order to trace the possible sources of pollution.

The sample sent for analysis on August 17th shewed no abnormality, therefore whatever did occur must have occurred between August 17th and September 19th and, during this period, the only known incident at the pumping station was the opening of the ground near the tap on the rising main to repair a leakage. A series of samples were then taken, not only from the pumping station, but also from other points, chlorination being interrupted for a short period before the taking of each sample. By October 2nd, all samples were reported to be satisfactory and there has been no recurrence of the pollution.

Chlorination is now continued as a routine measure, but treatment with calgon has not been resumed, it being considered possible that some extraneous matter might have been introduced during the process.

Exactly how the pollution occurred has not been determined and it is fortunate that there were no serious repercussions. Inevitably, at any waterworks, there is a certain amount of general maintenance work going on so the possibility of accidental pollution cannot be lightly dismissed; and I think the inference to be drawn is that, where large public supplies are concerned, no matter what care is taken or how impeccable the sources of supply appear to be, chlorination should, in the interests of the general public, be a routine procedure.

Drainage & Sewerage:-

This problem is one of complexity in a scattered rural district and is intimately connected with the question of water supply. At present Sawston is the only parish that has a sewage disposal works. The works, however, and its ancillaries, are out of date and cannot cope with the demands made upon them. As Sawston is semi-industrial in character the situation is made worse by the fact that trade

effluent is discharged into the sewers.

Other parishes with piped water supplies urgently in need of adequate sewerage facilities are Linton, (Population: 1,404), Balsham, (Population: 657), Melbourn, (Population: 1,325), and Gamlingay, (Population: 1,314.) In most of the other parishes there are nuisances, varying in degree, caused by the pollution of the ditches and streams by sewage matter but Sawston and the others referred to above should, in my opinion, be dealt with at an early date.

Schemes for dealing with Sawston and Linton had been prepared before the war and the whole question of sewerage and sewage disposal throughout the area has now been referred to the Council's Consulting Engineers.

#### Rivers & Streams:-

The rivers at Sawston and Linton are grossly polluted by sewage matter and will continue to be so polluted until adequate sewerage schemes are provided for these parishes.

#### PUBLIC CLEANSING

The Rural District of South Cambridgeshire is the only District in the County of Cambridge that has not an adequate scavenging scheme administered by the District Council acting as the Public Health Authority. At the present moment the situation is that periodical collections of refuse are made in the parishes of Bassingbourn, Kneesworth, Melbourn, Litlington, Hinxton, Ickleton, Linton, Great Chishill, Sawston, Horseheath, Castle Camps, Shudy Camps, Gamlingay, East Hatley, Hatley St. George, Whittlesford, Fowlmere, Thriplow, and Abington Pigotts. The collections are made by private contractors and the refuse is disposed of in parish dumps.

This question has been the subject of comment in most of my Annual Reports and in 1938 parishes were circularised as to whether they wished for such a service or not. The majority, apparently, was not in favour, and so the question was dropped. The matter has, however, been revived again but, so far, without much result.

#### SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Complaints	216
<u>Housing:-</u>	
General Inspections for repairs etc.	88
Reinspections	417
<u>Rural Housing Survey:-</u>	
Preliminary Survey	156
Full inspections	1267
For overcrowding only	249
Reinspections re classification	105
Inspections re unoccupied houses	31
Overcrowding	12
<u>Infectious Diseases:-</u>	
Cases investigated	17
No. of rooms disinfected	18
<u>Verminous premises:-</u>	
Inspections	19
Disinfestations	5
<u>Water Supply:-</u>	
Inspections	91
Samples of water for analysis	111
Samples of water re chemical treatment	4
Chlorination Tests	116
<u>Milk and Dairies Order:-</u>	
Inspection of Cowsheds and Dairies	293

Meat Inspections & Food & Drugs Act	167
Ditches, drains and cesspools	172
Food premises, bakehouses etc.	32
Factories Act	23
Sanitary Accommodation	26
Schools	13
Moveable Dwellings	8
Scavenging & Cleansing	56
Sewage Disposal	68
A.R.P. Services	32
Miscellaneous Inspections	34

3846

Number of nuisances abated and defects etc. remedied 145  
 Repairs done to 70 houses as a result of informal action.  
 Repairs done to 2 houses as a result of formal action.

#### H O U S I N G.

During the year a Rural Housing Joint Committee was formed as recommended in the Hobhouse Report on Rural Housing and Circular 64/44 dated May 24th 1944, issued by the Ministry of Health. This Committee consisted of representatives from the County Council and the three Rural District Councils in the County. The Committee met on two occasions and the meetings were attended by the technical officers of the respective Councils.

At the first meeting on July 10th it was resolved that a Technical Sub-Committee consisting of the Medical Officer of Health to the three Rural District Councils, together with the Chief Sanitary Inspectors and Housing Officers be formed, with instructions to prepare and submit a full report for consideration at the next meeting.

The Technical Sub-Committee met on several occasions and prepared a report dealing with such standards of fitness and methods of carrying out the housing survey as, in the opinion of the Sub-Committee, could be uniformly applied throughout the rural part of the County. This report, which is too long to reproduce here, was adopted at the second meeting of the Housing Joint Committee held on August 14th.

In the South Cambridgeshire Rural District additional temporary staff has been engaged for the prosecution of the survey.

After 5 years of war and depleted staffs, during which period the work of housing inspection and the repair of houses has been neglected, no accurate information as to the number of unfit houses, the number of houses requiring repair, and the extent of overcrowding, can be available until such a survey is made; and the number of houses found to be beyond repair, together with the degree of overcrowding must necessarily have a bearing on future housing schemes.

In South Cambridgeshire it is estimated that there are approximately 5,000 houses of the working class type, and the survey is at present being limited to these. The survey was commenced in May and the following summary shews the total number of houses inspected up to the end of 1945 and the categories in which they have been placed.

Rural Housing Survey.

<u>Parish.</u>	<u>No. of houses Inspected.</u>	<u>Result of Inspection.</u>				
		<u>Classification of Inspected houses.</u>				
		<u>Categories.</u>				
		1	2	3	4	5
Wendy	18	1	1	14	-	2
Shingay	7	1	-	6	-	-
Tadlow	21	-	-	13	5	3
Croydon	44	-	4	21	8	11
Melbourn	305	7	15	219	26	38
Meidreth	96	1	3	71	7	14
Castle Camps	138	22	31	28	25	32
Shudy Camps	56	7	20	19	5	5
Horseheath	88	2	38	32	8	8
West Wickham	82	4	22	19	22	15
West Wratting	81	10	30	20	14	7
Arrington (Part)	37	-	1	32	3	1
Gamlingay (Part)	7	-	-	2	-	5
Carleton	34	-	12	7	10	5
Hinxton (Part)	6	-	-	6	-	-
Fowlmere (Part)	2	-	-	-	-	2
Weston Colville	83	-	49	17	10	7
Linton (Part)	5	-	-	2	-	3
Balsham	134	-	41	62	20	11
Shepreth	93	-	32	32	25	4
Lt. Abington	46	-	8	18	8	12
Bartlow	8	-	4	3	1	-
Hildersham (Part)	36	-	9	14	5	8
Foxton (Part)	64	-	23	18	19	4
Gt. Abington (Part)	26	-	1	3	11	11
		1517	55	344	678	232
						208

Key to Categories:-

1. Satisfactory in all respects.
2. Minor defects.
3. Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement.
4. Appropriate for reconditioning.
5. Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at reasonable expense.

As a result of the survey it is found that the general standard of houses in the district is low. Repairs of an urgent nature have continued to be dealt with, but it is still difficult for owners to get builders and thatchers to undertake work and it is feared that, unless labour and materials are soon available, many more houses will get into such a bad state of disrepair as to render them unfit for human habitation.

When circumstances are such that those houses shewn under category 4 can be dealt with it is thought that, owing to low rents and the absence of financial assistance by means of a grant, owners will not be prepared to carry out reconditioning and therefore a proportion of these houses will come into category 5.

## 1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:-

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 1595
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 1595

(2) (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 & 1932, and also as part of Rural Housing Survey	1517
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	1517
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	208
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under proceeding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	1254
2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	70
3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-		
(A) Proceedings under section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	Nil	
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-		
(a) By Owners	-	
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	2	
(B) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	-	
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-		
(a) By Owners	-	
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	Nil	
(C) Proceedings under section 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	2	
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders:-		
(a) By Owners	3	
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	Nil	
(D) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:-		
(1) Number of separate tenements or		

	underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	3
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined	Nil
4.	Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding.	
	Number of new cases of over-crowding.	6
	Number of cases abated	2

Inspection and Supervision of Food.(a) Milk Supply:

Number of Wholesale Producers	39
Number of Producer-Retailers	50
Number Wholesale & Retail Producers	23
Number of Retail Purveyors only	15

Of the above number, 13 are T.T. producers and 33 Accredited Producers.

During the year 293 visits were made to cowsheds and dairies.

As a result of these inspections informal notices were served on several cowkeepers with reference to limewashing etc. Structural alterations and improved water supply was carried out at 4 cowsheds.

No samples of milk were taken, as this is being done under the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme by the War Agricultural Officers.

(b) Meat and Other Foods.

Number of visits to meat stores, shops and buffer depots - 167.

The following meat, tinned foods, etc., were found on inspection to be unfit for human consumption and were voluntarily surrendered and destroyed:-

21 tins of milk  
 59 tins of Prim  
 2 tins of Corned Beef  
 6 tins of Stewed Steak  
 20 tins of Fish  
 11 tins of Beans  
 138 tins of Assorted Foodstuffs  
 44½ lbs. of Beef  
 126 lbs. of Pork  
 53 lbs. of Bacon  
 8 lbs. of Butter  
 47 lbs. of Tea

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

The incidence of the major infectious diseases has continued to be low and the total number of notifications under age groups is shewn in the following tabular form:-

Analysis under age groups. At Ages - Years.

Total cases notified - 1. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 10. 15. 20. 35. 45. 65.

	Admitted Hospital	Deaths

Disease

Disease	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	35	45	65
Measles	535	18.	33.	47.	40.	47.	225.	70.	33.	18.	4.
Whooping Cough	62	7	8.	9.	4.	5.	24.	4.	-	1.	2.
Trachoma	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.
Scarlet Fever	6	-	-	1.	2.	-	2.	-	1.	2.	1.
Diphtheria	1	-	-	-	-	-	1.	-	-	-	1.
Puerperal pyrexia	2	-	-	-	-	-	2.	-	-	2.	-
Pneumonia	15	-	-	-	7.	-	5.	2.	3.	2.	7.
Totals	623	25.	41.	57.	46.	52.	252.	74.	34	27.	7.
											8.
											12.

the number of notifications of some of the principal infectious diseases during the last ten years is shewn in the following table:-

	1935.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.
Scarlet Fever	87.	11.	58.	14.	26.	12.	5.	17.	10.	13.	6
Diphtheria	2.	-	1.	1.	1.	1.	1.	2.	2.	-	1.
Measles	-	-	-	-	-	134.	681.	25.	256.	95.	535.
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	14.	57.	73.	92.	112.	56.	62.
Pneumonia	11.	7.	6.	8.	18.	13.	20.	6.	11.	3.	13.
Pyphoid & para typhoid fevers	1.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Diphtheria immunisation:- The arrangements outlined in my Report for the year 1942 have been continued with satisfactory results. It is estimated that about 83% of children under 5 years of age and 85% between 5 and 14 years of age have been immunised and that 411 in these age groups were dealt with during the year. The approximate child population in the age groups 6 - 4 and 5 - 14 inclusive, mid 1945, was 1,710 and 3,030 respectively. The different forms of records suggested in Circular 193/45 issued by the Ministry of Health in November 1945 have been adopted.

So far as the non-notifiable diseases are concerned there is little to comment upon.

### Tuberculosis.

#### New cases and Mortality during 1945.

Age Periods.	New cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-								
1-	1.							1.
5-				1.				
15-	2.	2.	1.				1.	
25-	3.	1.				1.		1.
35-								
45-	4.							
55-	1.					1.		
65- & upwards	1.	1.	1.				1.	
Totals	12.	4.	3.	-	2.	2.	1.	1.

There were three deaths of persons not previously notified as suffering from tuberculosis. No action has been necessary under the Public Health Prevention of Tuberculosis Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Arthur Morgan,

M.A., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.

